DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION
Prepared By
STATE OF MONTANA
DEPARTMENT OF HIGHWAYS

DRAFT
ENVIRONMENTAL/SECTION 4(F) STATEMENT
for

PROJECT F-100(9)
COLUMBIA FALLS - EAST AND WEST

THIS HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENT IS PROPOSED FOR FUNDING UNDER TITLE 23, U.S.C. THIS STATEMENT FOR THE IMPROVEMENT WAS DEVELOPED IN CONSULTATION WITH THE FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION AND IS SUBMITTED PURSUANT TO:

42 U.S.C. 4332(2)(C)
and
49 U.S.C. 1653(F)

H.J. ANDERSON, DIRECTOR OF HIGHWAYS

BY Jack R. Bobst DATE 10-17-72
ADMINISTRATOR
ENGINEERING DIVISION

APPROVED AND ADOPTED BY THE
FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION

H N Stewart DATE 11/8/72
HAROLD N. STEWART
DIVISION ENGINEER

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SUMMARY SHEET

I. TYPE OF ACTION

(X) Administrative
(X) Draft
( ) Environmental Statement
(X) Combination Environmental/Section 4 (f) Statement
( ) Legislative
( ) Final

II. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This project begins approximately 0.4 miles west of the Montana 40 - FAS 206 junction and proceeds easterly through the town of Columbia Falls and across the Flathead River where it ends about 0.2 miles west of the Montana 40 - U. S. 2 junction near Columbia Heights. The project is a reconstruction of approximately 4.5 miles of existing Montana Highway 40 and essentially follows the same alignment with a few minor changes to flatten some curves and miss the existing Flathead River Bridge. This bridge will be left in place for use as a detour until the new bridge is complete.

The project will be designed using three different typical sections. West of Columbia Falls a four-lane, 44' centers facility will be provided. This section will utilize 4-12' driving lanes, 10' outside shoulders and a 20' painted median. Through Columbia Falls itself, a 64' curb and gutter urban section with 4-11' driving lanes, 9' outside shoulders

and a 2' painted median will be provided. A storm sewer, lighting and sidewalks will be provided in conjunction with this urban section. East of town, a 44' roadway with 2-12' driving lanes and 10' outside shoulders will be utilized. This section will include the new Flathead River structure.

III. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

The long lasting impact of this project will be beneficial in nature as it will provide a fast, safe and efficient transportation facility. There will be some adverse environmental impact on the area which has been discussed in detail in this statement, but this will not be enough to significantly alter the character of the area.

New right-of-way will have to be purchased to provide adequate land for the new highway facility. At the present stage of development of the project, it appears that approximately 45 acres of new right-of-way will be required for the entire project. Roughly two-thirds of this is productive farmland and the other third is being used for other things such as homes or businesses or is vacant.

Displacement of people cannot be avoided and we now estimate the following relocations will be required:

6 Businesses
5 Residences

Clearing for the project will be limited to 5 feet outside the construction limits and this will amount to about 40 acres.

Much of this cleared land will be topsoiled and reseeded and generally restored to its former state.

There will be some increase in noise and air pollution during construction of the project, although these two items should return to their present levels upon completion. The long-term impact will result in increased noise and pollution due to the substantial increase in traffic that is expected on this highway in the future.

The project will require a 10' x 125' strip along the northern boundary of Pinewood Park in Columbia Falls. In addition to this a 25' - 40' x 125' construction permit will also be required. The actual right-of-way taking and the construction permit are unavoidable, as is pointed out elsewhere in this statement. However, it has been determined that these will not have any significant effect on the operation of the park.

IV. ALTERNATIVES

From the beginning of the project to a point just west of the Burlington Northern tracks, the proposed alignment generally follows the present highway. Other alignments were studied through this area, but it was obvious that following the present highway would cause the least environmental impact, bethe most economical and would provide the best services to the area. From the point just west of the Burlington Northern tracks to the end of the project, detailed studies were made

on five different alternates. These were as follows: Four-Lane Alternate "A", Four-Lane Alternate "B", Couplet Alternate "A", Couplet Alternate "B" and the Bypass Alternate.

Four-Lane Alternate "A" and Four-Lane Alternate "B" are essentially the same until they reach the vicinity of First Avenue. At this point, the alignments differ as at this point Four-Lane Alternate "B" curves southeasterly towards the Flathead River, while the alignment of Four-Lane Alternate "A" continues easterly for a few more blocks before it curves toward the river. Both alternates cross the river just north of the present structure and then tie back in and follow the P. T. W. to the end of the project.

Couplet Alternate "A" and Couplet Alternate "B" would separate the traffic with the two eastbound lanes using 11th Street and the two westbound lanes using 9th Street. These two alternates are essentially the same until they reach the vicinity of First Avenue. At this point, Couplet Alternate "B" curves to the southeast toward the Flathead River, while Couplet Alternate "A" continues on east for a few more blocks before curving toward the river. Both alternates would cross the Flathead River on the north side of the existing structure and then tie back into the P. T. W. and follow it to the end of the project.

The Bypass Alternate would start just west of the Burlington Northern tracks and curve immediately to the southeast, passing on the south side of Columbia Falls. This alignment would cross

the Flathead River just east of the existing county bridge and then curve back to the northeast, eventually tieing back into the present highway. Only two lanes would be provided for this alternate as the amount of traffic using it would be considerably less than on the other four alternates.

Four-Lane Alternate "B" has been selected as the recommended alternate and design is proceeding using this alignment. The alternate was chosen on the basis of providing the best overall service, being one of the most economical and having the least impact on the area. In the vicinity of the Flathead River, further studies were made to determine if it would not be more economically feasible to cross south of the existing structure instead of north of it. From these studies, it was determined that it would be cheaper and therefore this change was made in the alignment of Four-Lane Alternate "B"

Because of the obvious potential for controversy regarding the method of crossing the Burlington Northern tracks on the west edge of Columbia Falls, plans are to prepare three alternate designs. One alternate would cross the tracks at-grade, the second would separate the highway over the tracks and the third would separate the highway under the tracks. At this time, the alternate designs are not complete and no decision has been made as to which alternate to use.

Several of the alternates already discussed would have avoided the necessity of taking any land from the Pinewood Park in Columbia Falls. However, the recommended alternate will involve taking a 10' strip of the park plus a 25'-40' constr-

uction permit. The possibility of taking this 10' strip from the north side of the highway away from the park was considered, but found to be not economically feasible.

The do-nothing alternate was given some consideration, but this would not fulfill the basic responsibility of providing safer and more efficient transportation and, therefore, this alternate was eliminated.

V. FEDERAL, STATE AND LOCAL AGENCIES AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONS FROM WHICH COMMENTS WERE REQUESTED:

1. Assistant Secretary - Program Policy
   Attention: Director, Environmental Project Review
   Department of the Interior
   Washington, D.C. 20240 (12 copies)

2. Director, Department of Natural Resources and Conservation
   Attention: Lawrence M. Jakub
   Sam W. Mitchell Building
   Helena, Montana 59601

3. Fletcher E. Newby, Executive Director
   Environmental Quality Council
   Capitol Station
   Helena, Montana 59601 (2 copies)

4. Department of Planning and Economic Development
   Capitol Post Office
   Helena, Montana 59601

5. Environmental Protection Agency
   Room 916, Lincoln Tower
   1860 Lincoln Street
   Denver, Colorado 80203 (5 copies)

6. U.S. Forest Service
   Region 1
   Federal Building
   Missoula, Montana 59801

7. Department of the Army
   Seattle District, Corps of Engineers
   1519 Alaskan Way South
   Seattle, Washington 98134

8. United States Coast Guard
   Commander (dpa)
   Thirteenth Coast Guard District
   618 Second Avenue
   Seattle, Washington 98104

9. Director
   Montana Fish and Game Department
   Sam W. Mitchell Building
   Helena, Montana 59601

10. Board of County Commissioners
Flathead County Courthouse
Kalispell, Montana 59901

11. Soil Conservation Service
685 Sunset Boulevard
Kalispell, Montana 59901

12. Postmaster
Columbia Falls, Montana 59912

13. Department of Health, Education and Welfare
9017 Federal Office Building
19th and Stout Streets
Denver, Colorado 80202

14. Student Environmental Research Center
Room 212, Venture Center
University of Montana
Missoula, Montana 59801

15. Mayor
City of Columbia Falls
Columbia Falls, Montana 59912

16. School District Number 6
Columbia Falls, Montana 59912

17. Montana Aeronautics Commission
P.O. Box 1698
Helena, Montana 59601

18. Dr. T.C. Byerly
Office of Secretary of Agriculture
Washington, D.C. 98109

VI. DATE DRAFT STATEMENT MADE AVAILABLE TO C.E.Q.:

December 5, 1972

DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL/SECTION 4(F) STATEMENT

I. PURPOSE OF THE PROJECT

Project F-100(9) Columbia Falls - East and West involves the reconstruction of a 4.5± mile section of Montana Highway No. 40 in Flathead County.

The existing highway was constructed in 1937 and 1939 with additional surfacing being added in 1953 and 1955. The present roadway width is 28 feet except for a 0.7 mile urban section in Columbia Falls, which is 34 feet. The surfacing width varies from 22 to 24 feet. The 1970 sufficiency rating covering the majority of this section of primary highway is as follows:

1. Foundation - maximum of 10 - rated at 0
2. Surface - maximum of 30 - rated at 10
3. Drainage - maximum of 10 - rated at 8
4. Safety - maximum of 20 - rated at 0
5. Capacity - maximum of 30 - rated at 20

The above ratings are very low and indicate that the existing highway is badly in need of reconstruction. Therefore, the purpose of this project is to provide a safer and more efficient highway that will provide better service to the rural and urban areas that the project traverses. Also, this project will provide a much better highway for tourists traveling into and out of nearby Glacier National Park.

II. DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT AND SURROUNDING AREA

This project is located in northwestern Montana in the central part of Flathead County. It involves the reconstruction of a 4.5± mile section of Montana Highway #40 which runs east from U.S. Highway #93 through Columbia Falls to U.S. Highway #2. The project lies in the northern part of the fertile Flathead Valley with its rich, irrigated farmland.

A short distance away are rugged, forested, mountainous areas that offer spectacular hunting, fishing and general recreation. A few miles to the west of Glacier National Park and to the southeast is nationally famous Hungry Horse Dam and Lake. The project crosses the main Flathead River just east of Columbia Falls.

Beyond Hungry Horse Lake is the Bob Marshall Wilderness Area, 950,000 acres that can be entered only by foot or horseback. To the south lies Flathead Lake, a popular summer home area with public fishing, swimming and boating facilities available.

The Flathead National Forest encompasses much of the surrounding area and provides an abundance of public land. There are numerous developed and undeveloped camping grounds with 21 public facilities being available in Glacier National Park. Most of the nearby lakes are surrounded with trails and roads that provide people with a variety of locations for overnight camping. There are also several commercial

campgrounds and trailer parks in the area.

A map showing the relationship of this project to Flathead Lake, Hungry Horse Lake, Glacier National Park, etc., is included in the exhibit section of this statement.

The project itself begins approximately .37 miles west of the Montana 40 - FAS 206 (locally known as LaSalle Road) Junction. From there it proceeds easterly, generally following existing Montana 40, through the town of Columbia Falls and thence across the Flathead River where it ends approximately .15± miles west of the Montana 40 - U. S. 2 Junction near Columbia Heights. The beginning of the project ties in with the Columbia Falls West Project, which is currently scheduled to be built in 1974 and the end of the project ties into the Columbia Heights Safety Project which was completed in 1971. The difference in length between the existing highway and the new highway is negligible as the alignment of the new highway for the majority of the project follows existing Montana 40.

This project will involve 3 different typical sections. The first 1.5± miles will be built as a four-lane, 44' centers facility. This will provide 4-12' driving lanes, 10' outside shoulders and a 20' painted median. The next 2.1± miles of the project, through Columbia Falls, will be a 64' curb and gutter urban section. This will provide 4-11' driving lanes, 9' outside shoulders and a 2' painted median. The last .9± of a mile will be a 44' roadway with 2-12' driving lanes and 10' outside shoulders.

The alignment of this project for the first 3.5± miles will be projected right or left of the present highway as much as possible. Near the Flathead River the alignment has been projected south of the P. T. W. to miss the existing structure over the river. This was done so that the existing structure could be used as a detour during construction of this project. Upon completion of the project, the existing structure will be removed. The existing piers will be removed as per the Montana Department of Highways standard specifications which call for removal to the bottom of the channel.

A major structure will be required across the Flathead River. This new structure will be just downstream from the existing structure and will cross the river at a right angle on a tangent alignment. The project crosses the Burlington Northern tracks just west of Columbia Falls. To determine if a structure is required at this location, 3 alternate designs are being considered. One alternate is an at-grade crossing with signals and short arm gates provided. The second alternate would separate the highway over the tracks and the third would separate the highway under the tracks.

Sidewalks and lighting will be provided on both sides of the street within the city limits of Columbia Falls.

A storm sewer will be provided throughout Columbia Falls in conjunction with the urban typical section.

The traffic count throughout this project varies considerably due in part to the large amount of traffic turning off Montana 40 and onto Nucleus Avenue and vice versa. The main

business district of Columbia Falls is located on Nucleus Avenue and it carries a considerable amount of traffic. Montana 40 is the only east-west highway in the area that connects U. S. 2 and U. S. 93. Therefore, people coming from the east or west and wanting to reach the Columbia Falls business district will generally use Montana 40 and then turn at the Nucleus Avenue intersection. This is what accounts for the large turning movement at this location. Another factor causing this variation in traffic count is the fact that the project traverses both a rural and an urban area. The projected average daily traffic for the design year of 1996 ranges from 14,540 vehicles per day in the urban area to 2963 vehicles per day in the rural area. The overall average daily traffic for the entire project is 7660 vehicles per day. The average traffic for the entire project 2 years after completion is expected to be approximately 4595 vehicles per day.

The existing right-of-way along Montana 40 in the vicinity of this project varies from 80' to 100' with an average take of approximately 90'. The existing strip of right-of-way through Columbia Falls is 70' wide. The new right-of-way from the beginning of the project to the start of the urban typical section will be about 204' wide. This will provide 80' from the centerline of each roadway with 44' between centerlines. The right-of-way for the urban section through Columbia Falls will be 80' wide. From the end of the urban section to the end of the project, the right-of-way width will be about 160', which will provide 80' on each side of the centerline. These widths

may vary somewhat at a later date depending on whether the construction limits require more or less width than that stated.

Access to the existing highway is not controlled to any extent. The only actual control, if it can be called that, is that anyone wanting an approach has to obtain a permit before an approach can be built.

Access control to the new highway will be quite similar to that on the existing highway. All approaches will have to be in accordance with the Approach Standards for Montana Highways.

III. PROJECT HISTORY AND CURRENT STATUS

The preliminary engineering program for this project was approved in January, 1966. From 1966 to 1970, preliminary studies were made and it was decided that five alternate alignments should be considered. Each of these alternates was studied quite thoroughly and were presented to the public at a corridor public hearing held in Columbia Falls on January 7, 1970. Based on comments received at the hearing and other information concerning the alternates, the Montana Highway Commission in regular session in February, 1970, approved one of the alternates as the recommended alternate. Subsequently, the Route Location Study Report was completed to cover all five alternates, with the commission approved line noted as the proposed location. This report was submitted to the Federal Highway Administration in May, 1970 and approval of the proposed alternate was granted in June, 1970.

In February, 1970, at the time the commission selected the recommended alternate, they also decided to split the project into two separate sections. This was done because it was felt that there would not be sufficient funding available to let the entire 4.5 miles in one contract. Therefore, as indicated by the commission, we are proceeding on the basis of two separate contracts for the 4.5 mile route. The first section extends from the beginning of the project easterly for about 3.6 miles to end just west of the Flathead River. The other section will cover the last 0.9± miles and will include the Flathead River Bridge.

A location survey was made for the entire 4.5 miles and was furnished to the designer in Helena in August, 1971. Plans are to design the entire 4.5 mile project at this time instead of splitting it and this design is currently underway. Right-of-way will be secured for the entire 4.5 miles when the project advances to that stage. The current schedule calls for the first 3.6± mile section of the project to be let to contract in July, 1975, but this may change depending on priorities and funds available. The second section is not presently scheduled in the five-year program which means the earliest it could be let is 1978.

The environmental/section 4 (f) statement is being prepared to cover the entire 4.5 mile project.

IV. DESCRIPTION OF EXISTING ENVIRONMENT

A. HUMAN RESOURCES

Columbia Falls is a typical, small Montana community with the usual churches, schools, stores, service stations, etc. Many of the stores, motels and service stations are located along the existing highway as this is the location that provides the easiest access for the people they service. A considerable number of homes will also be found adjacent to the existing highway. The Montana Veterans Home is located near Columbia Falls as is the Anaconda Company Aluminum Plant. The national award winner Hungry Horse News, owned and operated by Mel Ruder, is located adjacent to the present highway in the vicinity of Nucleus Avenue.

From the beginning of the project to Station 280±, with the exception of the area just south of the FAS 206 junction, the new highway will pass through private farm land with both sides of the road being cultivated. Near the FAS 206 junction, there are several businesses including a night club and an outdoor theater. Between Stations 280± and 335±, the project traverses an area of private homes, some businesses such as lumber mills and trailer courts, and some vacant area. A cemetery is located south of Station 297±. From

Station 335± to Station 380±, the new highway will pass through a secondary business district of Columbia Falls. There are some private homes in this area, but most of the development is businesses such as motels, service stations, bars, a grocery store, a lumber company, etc. Between Station 380± and the river at Station 410± we are again in an area of some private homes, some businesses and a considerable amount of vacant private land. From the river to the end of the project, the project traverses a rural farming area.

B. PHYSIOGRAPHY AND GEOLOGY

This project lies in the northern part of the Flathead Valley near the Flathead River. The surrounding valley land is flat to gently rolling with rich, dry, sandy loam soil that is highly productive. A few miles away will be found mountainous, forested land with many scattered lakes and streams. The Flathead River flows through this area, with many small streams feeding into it.

The dominant influence on the topography of the area was Pleistocene glaciation in the Rocky Mountain Trench, with subsequent modification by the Flathead River. The material in the area consists of alluvial sands and silts; the silt being reworked glacial lake

silts. The major portion of the project will be built on glacio-acustrine deposits (well bedded, sometimes varved, sand and silt locally overlain by dune sand) and on glacial drift (till deposits of mostly well bedded gravel and sand). Poor drainage, characteristic of many glaciated areas does not appear to be a serious problem along the project. However, peat filled kettle holes could be encountered.

C. VEGETATION

Much of the surrounding area is now used for farming, and therefore, the vegetation mainly consists of crops such as wheat, oats, barley, potatoes and alfalfa. Small patches of timber consisting of lodgepole pine will be found along the project. There are some areas with native shrubs and grasses and in Columbia Falls, the usual urban type yards with lawns, flowers and small gardens will be found.

D. CLIMATE

The average temperature in this area is about 42°. The temperature normally varies from an average of about 65°F. in July to an average of about 20°F. in January. An average summer has 16 days with temperature readings of 90° and above and an average winter has 15 days with readings of 0° or below. In 1970, the highest temperature in nearby West Glacier was 92°F. in July, while the lowest temperature was -13°F. in January.

The average annual precipitation in this area is approximately 28 inches. Normal high precipitation occurs in December, January and June of each year and varies from 3 inches to 3.25 inches per month. Average winter snowfall is 69 inches. The Continental Divide forms an effective barrier that protects this area from most of the severe cold waves that sweep down from the Arctic across Canada and into the United States.

E. WATER AND AIR

There is an abundance of water resources in the area surrounding this project. This is basically due to the large amounts of snowfall that the nearby mountains receive during the winter months. Hungry Horse Reservoir on the South Fork of the Flathead River, lies a few miles to the southeast. Flathead Lake, approximately 20 miles to the south, is the largest natural lake in Montana. There are numerous small streams in the area and the main Flathead River passes through this project. The water in these lakes and rivers is very clear and is generally considered to be quite pure and clean.

The air in the vicinity of Columbia Falls is not as pure and clean as are most other areas of the state. This is due mainly to the emissions from the nearby

aluminum plant which is generally considered to cause a certain amount of pollution. Montana in general is considered to have air that is of a very high quality with a limited amount of pollution.

F. FISH AND WILDLIFE

There is an abundance of various kinds of wildlife in the area surrounding this project. Deer, elk, moose and black bear are found in the vicinity. However, due to the urban nature of the majority of this project, a person will very seldom see these animals while traveling on this project. Numerous small animals such as squirrels, chipmunks, coyotes, bobcats, porcupines and rabbits also inhabit the area and some of these may be seen as one travels through the area.

Ruffed, blue and franklin grouse can be found in the surrounding mountains, while ring-necked pheasants, hungarian partridge and various types of waterfowl will be found in the lower valleys.

The project will cross the Flathead River on the eastern edge of Columbia Falls. This river experiences quite a lot of fishing pressure with the following game fish being taken: rainbow trout, brook trout, cutthroat trout, Dolly Varden and mountain whitefish. Non-game fish such as carp and suckers also will be found in this river.

G. POPULATION

The present population of Columbia Falls, according to the 1970 census, is 2652 people. Also, the following number of people are found in the surrounding area: Columbia Falls rural - 1568, Bad Rock - Columbia Heights - 1243 and the neighboring South Fork division (Hungry Horse, Martin City, Coram, West Glacier and Essex) - 1707. This area has enjoyed a good population growth record mainly due to the increase in the lumber and aluminum industries coupled with the outstanding recreational character of the area.

H. LAND USE

The main use of land in the vicinity of this project is for agricultural purposes. Much of the land is now irrigated and crops such as wheat, barley, oats, potatoes and alfalfa are produced. Livestock production is increasing and, therefore, some of the land is used for grazing purposes. Small patches of timber will be found near the project, but these are not large enough to be cut for lumber. In the urban areas of the project, the land is broken into lots and used for homesites and businesses.

I. TRANSPORTATION SYSTEMS

The principle highway serving Columbia Falls is Montana Highway #40. This highway passes in an eastwest direction through the center of town. About 1 mile east of Columbia Falls, Montana 40 ties into U. S. Highway #2, the main northerly route across Montana. There are also

numerous other secondary highways and county roads that serve the area.

The mainline of the Burlington Northern passes on the western edge of Columbia Falls. The area is also served by Amtrak.

The nearest improved airport is the Glacier International Airport, approximately 6 miles to the south between Columbia Falls and Kalispell.

Bus transportation is also provided and serves the Columbia Falls Area.

J. UTILITY SYSTEMS

The Flathead Electric Cooperative, Inc., and Pacific Power and Light Company serve this area with electric power and telephone. As is generally the case, many of the power and telephone lines are located adjacent to the present highway. The Montana Power Company provides the area with natural gas. There are also many water lines in the vicinity of the project with most of them being owned by the City.

K. ECONOMIC ACTIVITY

The economic activity of the area is quite diversified with lumber, agriculture and aluminum production being the three main industries. The lumber and aluminum industries employ approximately 1500 people from Columbia Falls and the surrounding area. The agricultural industry is widespread with numberous small farms and ranches being located in the vicinity of Columbia Falls. Some people are employed by the U. S. Forest

Service, which has a complex in Hungry Horse and by the Bureau of Reclamation at Hungry Horse Dam. There are numerous tourist oriented businesses in the area. The usual supportive type businesses will be found in Columbia Falls.

L. PINEWOOD PARK

Pinewood Park is one of two improved public parks in Columbia Falls. It currently borders existing Montana 40 and will therefore be adjacent to the subject project in the vicinity of Station 364± to Station 365+ 50±.

The park was originally purchased by the City of Columbia Falls from the First National Bank of Butte on August 19, 1921. This original purchase consisted of all of blocks 67, 68, 69 and 70, except lots 1 and 2 of block 68. Please refer to exhibit number 4 on page 60 of this statement for a sketch of the area.

At the end of World War II, returning veterans could not find adequate housing in the area, so an emergency housing development was built on blocks 67 and 70. In 1957, this housing was no longer deemed necessary, and blocks 67 and 70 were sold and are now under private ownership. Under this private ownership, a trailer park has been developed on the west property line of blocks 67 and 70 and the emergency housing has been converted into rental apartments.

The city has officially abandoned the alleys in blocks 68 and 69 except behind lots 1 and 2 of block 68. Tenth Street between block 68 and 69 has also been abandoned. Therefore, the remaining park land including the abandoned streets and alleys amounts to 3.11 acres. Exhibit number 5 on page 61 of this statement indicates the abandoned streets, the private property and the remaining park land.

The Columbia Falls Civic Club took on the project of developing the park and due to their efforts, many improvements have been made. A swimming pool has been built, a playground with some equipment has been developed to the north of the pool, tennis courts and outside basketball standards were erected just to the west of the pool, and the southern part of the park was developed into a picnic area with an outside fireplace and picnic tables. These improvements are shown on exhibit number 6 on page 62.

At the present time, the city provides a supervised swimming program for children and adults. The program is offered only during the summertime as the pool is not enclosed and cannot be used during colder weather. The pool is open to everyone, but is used mostly by local people. The traveling public generally does not use the pool as it is quite hard to see from the highway.

The City Park Director has informed us that there are no plans for any further development of the park. There may be a need sometime in the future to cover the pool so that swimming facilities would be available year around, but there are currently no definite plans to do this.

V. PROBABLE IMPACTS OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT

A. BROAD IMPACTS

In light of the fact that this project is a reconstruction of the existing highway and generally follows the same alignment, the broad impacts upon the area are not expected to be of much consequence.

We do not expect this project to cause any more urbanization of the area than would have resulted if the project were not built.

The project will result in the relocation of several residences and businesses. However, we do not expect any major problems in regard to this relocation as some of the buildings can be moved back and replaced on the remaining property or new replacement property can be purhcased. All displaced persons and businesses will be provided with standard relocation assistance.

B. IMPACTS ON THE NARROW BAND ADJACENT TO THE HIGHWAY

This project will have a considerable effect on the area immediately adjacent to the highway. Most of this will occur during the construction process, but some will be of long-lasting nature.

During the construction period, the basic impact will be due to the noise pollution that will occur. This item will be increased considerably above its normal level due to the large machines and activity in the construction area.

The contractor will be required to adhere to all pertinent laws concerning this matter and he will have to follow the Montana Department of Highways' Standard Specifications as they pertain to water and air pollution. These two items are discussed further in Section VI-D in this statement.

Approximately 45 acres of new right-of-way will be required to construct this project and this will result in taking about 30 acres of farmland out of production. 0.03 acres of the Pinewood Park in Columbia Falls will also be taken.

The long-lasting impact of the project will be beneficial as it will provide a fast, safe and efficient facility. This type of highway is becoming more and more necessary for emergency vehicles, busses and commercial vehicles, as well as the general traveling public. It will provide better access to religious, educational, cultural, recreational and employment opportunities.

VI. ADVERSE ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS WHICH CANNOT BE AVOIDED

A. HUMAN RESOURCES

In order to provide an adequate highway facility, new right-of-way will have to be acquired which will involve the relocation of several homes and businesses. The design of this project is not yet complete and our present estimate may change somewhat as design progresses. However, it now appears that the following number of residences and businesses will require relocation:

6 Businesses
5 Residences

Standard right-of-way procedures which include relocation assistance will be available to all displaced persons and businesses. No person will be relocated unless or until adequate replacement housing is available.

No major problems are anticipated in relocating the displaced persons due to the fact that there is ample area in which to rebuild or move the displaced buildings. Also, there are houses for sale in the area which are available as replacement housing.

B. PHYSIOGRAPHY AND GEOLOGY

This project should have no adverse environmental effects on physiography and geology.

C. VEGETATION

Some clearing and covering up of existing vegetation will occur as a result of this project. The clearing

will be limited to 5 feet outside the construction limits. The total amount of vegetation that will be disturbed will amount to about 40 acres and this should not be enough to have a significant adverse effect on the environment of the area. The project will be top-soiled and reseeded with grasses as close to the native types as possible.

D. WATER AND AIR

The construction of this project will result in a temporary increase in water and air pollution while the new highway is under construction. The contractor will be required to adhere to all pertinent laws in regard to these problems. Upon completion of the project, these items should return to their present levels.

Following is an excerpt from the Montana Department of Highways' Standard Specifications in regard to the methods the contractor is to use to prevent stream pollution.

1. SILTATION CONTROL

The contractor will be required to prevent construction operations or the results of construction operations from silting rivers, streams and impoundments (lakes, reservoirs and the like). The construction of planned drainage facilities and the performance of other contract work that will help control siltation shall be done as soon as is

practicable. The siltation control measures described herein shall be continued until the permanent drainage facilities have been constructed.

The contractor shall shape the subgrade on road beds in the immediate vicinity of rivers, streams or impoundments prior to any lengthy suspension of construction operations. Shaping shall be done in a manner that will permit runoff waters to be intercepted along the outer edges of the subgrade and drained from the subgrade by temporary slope-drains. The temporary slope-drains shall be located along fill slopes at 500-foot intervals, approximately, and shall be paved or covered with waterproof materials.

Construction operations in rivers, streams and impoundments shall be restricted to those areas where channel changes are shown on the plans and to those areas which must be entered for the construction of temporary or permanent structures, unless other areas are approved. Temporary bridges, culverts or similar structures shall be used wherever crossings of a stream or river cause excessive siltation. Mechanized equipment shall not be operated in rivers, streams or impoundments except as may be required to construct channel changes and temporary or permanent structures. Rivers, streams and impoundments shall be promptly

cleared of such obstructions as falsework, piling or other obstructions placed therein or caused by the construction operations, after the purpose of such obstructions have been served. Debris in rivers, streams or impoundments placed therein or caused by construction operations shall be promptly removed. Excessive siltation resulting from placing material excavated from the roadway, channel changes, cofferdams and the like near to or in rivers, streams or impoundments shall be promptly corrected.

2. WATER POLLUTION

The contractor shall exercise every reasonable precaution throughout the life of project to prevent pollution of rivers, streams or impoundments. Pollutants such as chemicals, fuels, lubricants, bitumens, raw sewage and other harmful wastes shall not be discharged into or alongside of rivers, streams, impoundments or into natural or manmade channels leading thereto. The contractor shall meet the requirements of the applicable regulations of the State Fish and Game Department, State Board of Health and other state or federal regulations relating to the prevention or abatement of water pollution.

The contractor shall dispose of all refuse and discarded materials in an approved location.

Following is another excerpt from the Montana Department of Highways' Standard Specifications in regard to air pollution that the contractor will have to follow during construction of the project.

1. SMOKE AND DUST CONTROL

Whenever a hot-mix paving plant, aggregate crusher or similar operation is to be conducted, the contractor shall acquaint himself with all local conditions, city, county and state laws pertinent to air pollution before commencing his operations. It is possible that legal action may be instituted against the contractor to force him to conduct his operations in a dust and smoke free manner. The contractor should be prepared to operate in a manner satisfactory to a restraining court order. This may mean employing adequate dust filters and smoke collectors or use of other means meeting the existing requirements. No additional payment will be made to the contractor for the use or installation of dust or smoke control devices or for the disruption of work or loss of time occasioned by the installation of such control devices, or for any other related reasons.

The contractor shall have informed himself of all applicable Montana State Board of Health requirements and similar state or federal requirements pertaining to control of or abatement of air pollution. He shall

have provided or be prepared to provide such air pollution control measures as are required to comply with the minimum standards established by such agencies.

Current erosion control requirements call for the project to be topsoiled and seeded as soon as possible after rough grading is completed. As the vegetation becomes re-established, it will reduce the amount of erosion considerably.

The long-term impact of the project will result in increased noise, air and possibly water pollution due to the substantial increase in traffic that is expected in the future. However, since traffic is bound to increase regardless of whether or not this project is built, much of the increase in pollution would occur anyhow, and therefore, much of this increase will not be a direct result of the project. The project should actually help to reduce any possible water pollution due to the improved roadway and drainage facilities that will be provided. The major increase in pollution brought about by this project will be in regard to noise. This will be due mainly to the fact that the traffic lanes will be 12 feet closer to adjacent properties than were the existing lanes. Location approval for this project was granted prior to the effective date of P. P. M. 90-2 concerning noise levels; however, volumes of traffic on this project are in a range that have produced

tolerable levels of noise in the past for comparable situations.

This project should not have any adverse environmental effects on the ground water in the area.

A storm drain system will be provided in conjunction with the urban typical section through Columbia Falls. This drain system will empty into the Flathead River with some type of settling basin or riprap layers being provided to allow the sand, silt, etc. to settle out before the storm drain water enters the river.

Surface drainage on the rural portion of the project will be handled by the use of ditches and culverts. Natural drainage patterns will be perpetuated.

E. FISH AND WILDLIFE

Since the project is mainly in an urban area, a person will not generally see much wildlife while traveling on the existing highway that this project will replace. Therefore, although the four-lane facility will make it more difficult for any animals that may wish to cross, it will not have a significant adverse environmental effect on wildlife in the area.

Although there may be some slight pollution of the Flathead River during construction of the project, this will be for a short time only and should not have any significant effect on the fish in the river. Any slight

pollution that does occur would be caused by disturbances of drainages running into the Flathead.

F. POPULATION

This project should not have any adverse environmental effect on the population of the area. It will provide a fast, safe and efficient facility that will provide better service to people who wish to use it.

In regard to any possible effect on pedestrian movements to parks, schools, etc., this project will in general be more difficult to cross because of the four lanes of traffic. A traffic signal has recently been programmed for construction at the intersection of Montana 40 and 4th Avenue. This installation will be pedestrian actuated and will be installed basically to provide a safer school crossing. A bouncing ball type of light is presently located at this intersection. The new signal will be located to fit the future reconstruction of Montana 40 and will be perpetuated when the subject project is built. Other painted and signed pedestrian and school crossings will be provided at various other locations. However, at this time, these locations have not been determined. It is doubtful if any other signalized intersection will be provided.

G. LAND USE

In order to provide an adequate highway facility, new right-of-way will be required which will result in land being taken and changed from its present use. Since the alignment of the new highway generally follows the existing highway, the present right-of-way will be utilized as much as possible

and this will result in taking approximately 45 acres of new right-of-way for the entire project. Roughly two-thirds of this is productive farm land and the other third is being used for other things such as homes and businesses or is vacant. These figures are only approximate because as design progresses, some changes may be made that will affect them. If necessary, the figures will be revised in the final statement.

We do not expect this project to have a significant effect on adjacent land use since we are only taking a small amount of right-of-way and are not changing existing access patterns. Perhaps as time passes, there will be more development along the new highway than there would have been along the old due to the improved facility, but at this time a person can only speculate on this.

H. TRANSPORTATION SYSTEMS

Since the new project is to be built generally on the same alignment as existing Montana 40, there will be a general disruption of traffic in the area while the project is under construction. These disruptions will be short lived and upon completion of the project, a much improved facility will be available for the traveling public. This project will not have any adverse environmental effects on any other transportation systems in the area.

I. UTILITY SYSTEMS

This project will interfere with many of the utilities now in place along the existing highway. The conflicting utilities will be relocated and perpetuated throughout the project. The utilities in conflict will include power lines, telephone lines, natural gas lines and water lines, although the extent of involvement with each type has not been completely determined at this time. There may be some short-time disruption to the systems while they are being relocated, but there will not be any lasting environmental effects.

The possibility of burying the power and telephone lines and thereby improving the aesthetics of the project was given some consideration, but was discarded because of the cost and problems involved. We have estimated that burying these lines could run into as much as 1/3 more cost for utility relocation. Also, to get all the lines along the project buried, we would have to disturb lines that were not really in conflict, but could not be left standing because otherwise the lines would be going from underground to aerial and back again.

J. ECONOMIC ACTIVITY

This project should have no adverse environmental effect on the economic activity of the area. Instead, it should be beneficial because of the improved access to Columbia Falls and the improved farm-to-market facility. Also, there will probably be an increase in

economic activity in the area due to the activity brought about while the project is under construction.

K. PINEWOOD PARK

The proposed highway project will require a strip along the northern boundary of Pinewood Park parallel and adjacent to Montana Highway 40. The amount of park land taken for actual right-of-way will be a 10' wide strip by 125' long, which amounts to .03± acres. In addition to the actual right-of-way take, another strip approximately 25'-40' by 125' will be needed for a construction permit. This permit will allow the contractor to do some work in this area, but upon completion of the project, the land will still be part of the park and will not be actual highway right-of-way. The work that the contractor does in the permit area will involve building flat slopes which will be topsoiled and reseeded and will leave the permit area in such a stage that it will still be useful as a part of the park. The location of the right-of-way take and the construction permit is shown on page 59 of the exhibit section of this statement.

There is presently a pedestrian path from the north portion of the park down to the pool. There is a possibility that the right-of-way take and construction permit may increase the grade of this path and make it impassable. As design progresses, more will be known

about this situation. However, if the path does become impassable, a stairway or ramp will be built to perpetuate the pedestrian traffic.

Taking the 10' strip of right-of-way will involve the removal of a few existing trees. In the construction permit area, there are quite a few trees and although some may have to be removed, every effort will be made to preserve as many as possible.

L. WILD AND SCENIC RIVER SYSTEM

A study is presently underway to determine the possibility of including the Flathead River in the Wild and Scenic River System. A great deal of work has already been done on this study in regard to scenic, archaeological, soil, fisheries and geologic inventories and water quality and hydrology. Coordination meetings have also been held with various agencies, among them the Montana Department of Highways, to eliminate or minimize conflicts that could arise as planning develops.

Although this project involves crossing the Flathead River just east of Columbia Falls, we do not feel that it can be considered as an environmental intrusion that might affect the river classification or management, because all we are essentially doing is replacing an existing structure. Therefore, the project should not have any effect on the study, nor should it preclude the possibility of the river becoming part of the system.

VII. ALTERNATIVES

As has been indicated in the "Project History and Current Status" section of this statement, location approval was granted in June, 1970 and we are currently in the design phase of the project development.

A. ROUTE ALTERNATES

From the beginning of the project to a point just west of the Burlington Northern tracks, the new alignment will generally follow the existing highway. Through this area, a four-lane facility with 44-foot centers will be provided. Other alignments for this portion of the project were studied, but it was obvious that following the present highway would cause the least impact, be the most economical and would provide the best service to the area. From the point just west of the Burlington Northern tracks to the end of the project, detailed studies were made on five different alternates. These were as follows: Four-Lane Alternate "A", Four-Lane Alternate "B", Couplet Alternate "A", Couplet Alternate "B" and the Bypass Alternate. Four of the alternates, the exception being the Bypass Alternate, become concurrent again on the west side of the Flathead River and all then follow the same alignment to the end of the project. The Bypass Alternate ties into this alignment about ½ mile east of the river and from this point ahead, all five alternates follow the present highway to the end of the project. Each of the above mentioned alter-

nates is discussed in detail in the following paragraphs. Also, aerial photo prints, which are included in the exhibit part of this statement, indicate the alternate alignments.

1. DESCRIPTIONS

a. Four-Lane Alternate "A"

From the point just west of the Burlington northern tracks to the vicinity of 1st Avenue, this alternate would follow the alignment of the existing highway. At about 1st Avenue, in order to provide a better intersection with Nucleus Avenue, it would leave the P.T.W. and travel on eastward for about 2 blocks before angling southeasterly toward the Flathead River. The new alignment would cross the river just north of the existing bridge and then tie back into the present highway and follow it to the end of the project.

This alternate would begin with the four-lane facility with 44-foot centers. Between the Burlington Northern tracks and 12th Avenue, it would transition into a four-lane urban section that would provide a 2-foot median, four 11-foot driving lanes, two 9-foot parking lanes and 8-foot border strips and would require 80 feet of right-of-way. This section would be utilized to

the curve just east of Nucleus Avenue, where the roadway would then transition into a two-lane, 44-foot wide section that would be utilized to the end of the project.

b. Four-Lane Alternate "B"

This alternate would be essentially the same as Four-Lane Alternate "A" until it would reach the vicinity of First Avenue. At this point, instead of continuing on eastward, it would curve to the southeast and generally follow the existing highway. Just west of the river, the alignment would tie back into the alignment of Four-Lane Alternate "A", cross the Flathead River north of the existing bridge and eventually tie back into the alignment of the present highway, which it would follow to the end of the project. The typical sections are the same as for Four-Lane Alternate "A" with the transition from two to four lanes occurring on the curve about ¼ mile west of the river.

c. Couplet Alternate "A"

This alternate would separate the traffic into a couplet system with two lanes of eastbound traffic using 11th Street and two lanes of westbound traffic using 9th Street. The 70 feet of existing right-of-way at these two streets

would be utilized and a typical section consisting of two 12-foot driving lanes, two 12-foot parking lanes and 11-foot border strips would be provided on each street. The alignment for the two lanes of this alternate on 9th Street would follow the existing highway from the beginning of the alternate to the vicinity of 1st Avenue. At this point, it would continue on eastward for about two more blocks before angling southeasterly on the same alignment as Four-Lane Alternate "A". The 11th Street leg of this alternate would extend easterly along 11th Street until the eastbound and westbound lanes intersected. At this point, the four lanes would transition to a two-lane, 44-foot roadway. From there ahead, the alignment would cross the Flathead River just north of the existing bridge and then tie back into and follow the existing highway to the end of the project.

d. Couplet Alternate "B"

This alternate would be essentially the same as Couplet Alternate "A" until it would reach 1st Avenue. At this point, the two lanes on 9th Street would curve southeasterly and follow the alignment of Four-Lane Alternate "B". The 11th Street leg would curve southeasterly at about

1st Avenue. The eastbound and westbound lanes would intersect about one-third mile west of the river. The four lanes would transition to a two-lane, 44-foot roadway at this point. From there to the end of the project, the alignment would be the same as Four-Lane Alternate "B".

e. Bypass Alternate

The Bypass Alternate would begin just west of the Burlington Northern tracks and immediately begin to curve to the southeast, passing on the south side of Columbia Falls. This alignment would cross the Flathead River just east of the existing county bridge and then curve back to the northeast, eventually tieing back into the existing highway about one-half mile west of the river. Only two lanes would be provided for this alternate because the amount of traffic served would be considerably less than on the other alternates.

2. PROBABLE EFFECTS OF EACH ALTERNATE

a. Four-Lane Alternate "A"

This alternate would generally be an economic asset to the area due to the improved access to Columbia Falls and to the existing businesses. However, as this alternate would leave the existing highway near Nucleus Avenue, it would

bypass several businesses between Nucleus Avenue and the Flathead River. Access to this area would be provided from the existing highway. The section of new alignment between Nucleus Avenue and the river would require the construction of a high, unsightly fill across an old meander loop of the river and would go through a nice residential area. In the area where the new highway follows the present highway, 10 feet of new right-of-way plus some construction permits would be required. This alternate would provide a good, right angle intersection with Nucleus Avenue.

b. Four-Lane Alternate "B"

This alternate would also be an asset to the economic activity of the area and since it would generally follow the existing highway, it would not bypass any existing businesses. Special attention would be required at the intersection of Nucleus Avenue which could involve some alteration of the alignment of Nucleus Avenue. The four-lane section of the alternate through town would require 10 feet of new right-of-way plus any necessary construction permits.

c. Couplet Alternate "A"

This alternate would have an adverse effect

on the economy of the area as about one-half of the traffic would be routed away from the existing businesses. The traffic on 11th Street would be traveling through a residential area and this could devalue the property. East of Nucleus Avenue, the leg of the alternate on 9th Street would require a high, unsightly fill to cross an old meander loop of the river and would pass through a residential area. No new right-of-way would be required west of Nucleus Avenue and east of 13th Avenue as the existing 70 feet of right-of-way would be utilized. A good, right angle intersection would be provided with Nucleus Avenue.

d. Couplet Alternate "B"

This alternate would also have an adverse effect on the economy of the area as it would route about one-half of the traffic away from the existing businesses. The traffic on 11th Street would be disrupting a residential area and some alteration would be necessary at the Nucleus Avenue intersection. The existing right-of-way on 9th and 11th Streets would be utilized for the new roadway.

e. Bypass Alternate

This alternate would route through traffic

entirely away from the existing business area and could thus have an adverse effect on the economy. Less than one-fourth of the total traffic will be going into town. It would pass through a new subdivision and also be between the site for a new Junior High School and most of the town. This would make it necessary for the majority of students to cross the highway to get to school. This alignment could be constructed without interfering with the flow of traffic. Also, it would replace the old county bridge south of Columbia Falls and leave the present bridge on Montana 40 for local traffic.

3. ESTIMATED COSTS

The following table indicates the total estimated cost of each alternate. These include right-of-way costs, structure costs, construction costs, preliminary engineering, construction engineering and contingencies. The costs do not include the first section of the project up to the Burlington Northern tracks, but rather only the part that involves the five alternates.

ITEM ALTERNATE	R/W, RELOCATION, & UTILITY COST	STRUCT. COST	CONST. COST	P.E., CONST. ENG. & CONTG.	TOTAL ESTIMATED COST
4 Lane Alt. A.	$747,572	$693,000	$538,502	$80,775	$2,059,849
4 Lane Alt. B.	$679,773	$693,000	$450,065	$67,510	$1,890,348
Couplet Alt. A.	$777,776	$693,000	$874,772	$131,216	$2,476,764
Couplet Alt. B.	$807,462	$693,000	$698,292	$104,744	$2,303,498
Bypass Alt.	$530,906	$723,000	$187,199	$28,080	$1,469,185

B. RAILROAD CROSSING ALTERNATES

Because of the obvious potential for controversy and differences of opinion regarding the Burlington Northern track crossing on the western edge of Columbia Falls, it was decided that the best way to handle the situation would be to prepare three alternate designs. One alternate would cross the tracks at-grade, the second would separate the highway over the track and the third would separate the highway under the track. Each of these alternates is discussed further in the following paragraphs. At this time, these alternate designs have not been completed and the decision as to which alternate to build has not been made. The previously mentioned cost estimates are based on an at-grade crossing at this location.

The involved railroad crossing is not actually the mainline track; however, it still experiences a fair amount of traffic. We have been advised that it does handle 12 freight trains and 12 switching movements per week.

1. DESCRIPTION

a. At-Grade Crossing

This type of crossing would provide about the same type of situation as now exists. This alternate would, of course, be the cheapest of the three alternates as no structure will be involved. Flashing signals and short-arm gates would be provided.

b. Highway Over Railroad

A hump would be introduced into the highway gradeline so that the highway could pass over the tracks without changing their elevation. A quite lengthy and expensive structure would be necessary that would have to provide for four lanes of traffic and sidewalks for pedestrians. Approximately 23.5 feet of clearance would be provided between the tracks and the bottom of the structure.

c. Highway Under Railroad

A dip would be introduced into the highway gradeline so that the highway could pass under the tracks. A quite expensive railroad underpass structure would be necessary that would have to carry the one railroad track and be long enough so that four lanes of traffic could pass under it. Approximately 17 feet of clearance would be provided between the highway and the bottom of the structure. The underpass structure would provide sidewalks and lighting for pedestrians and would have an adequate drainage system.

2. PROBABLE EFFECTS OF EACH ALTERNATE

a. At-Grade Crossing

This type of crossing would provide the same situation as now exists and generally would have little effect on the area.

b. Highway Over Railroad

This type of crossing would require a large fill to raise the highway gradeline enough to get over the tracks and this fill would extend for a considerable distance on either side of the railroad. A large differential in grade between the existing streets and the new highway would then exist and this would cause a loss of access for the streets and properties in the immediate vicinity of the crossing. The fill would be quite unsightly and would require the pruchasing of additional right-of-way. The large fill and structure would substantially increase the cost of the project.

c. Highway Under Railroad

For this alternate, a dip would be required in the grade line and this would have to extend for a considerable distance on either side of the tracks. This would cause a considerable loss of access in the immediate vicinity of the crossing due to the differential in grade. Additional right-of-way would be required and the cost of the project would increase substantially due to the extra excavation and the underpass structure.

C. MINOR MODIFICATIONS WITHIN THE CORRIDOR

Modifications will be made to the approved route during the final design by projecting away from existing improvements as much as possible.

D. THE DO-NOTHING ALTERNATE

As has been indicated previously in the "Purpose of the Project" section of this statement, the sufficiency ratings for this section of highway are very low and indicate a drastic need for a new highway. Therefore, although this alternate was considered, it would not fulfill the basic responsibility of providing safer and more efficient transportation for the traveling public and was eliminated.

E. THE SELECTED ALTERNATE

Except for the alignment in the vicinity of the Flathead River, Four-Lane Alternate "B", as previously described, is the selected alternate. This alternate was chosen on the basis of providing the best overall service with the least impact to Columbia Falls and the surrounding area. Since this selected alternate generally follows the existing highway, it precludes the need to re-orient traffic and generally sustains the local fire protection, mail, school and recreational patterns that now exist. It was also one of the most economical of the five alternates. Near the river, further studies

were made to see if it would not be more feasible and economical to cross the river south of the existing bridge instead of north of it. From this study, it was determined that it would be approximately $6000 cheaper and therefore, it was decided to cross the river south or downstream from the existing bridge. As has been mentioned previously in regard to the railroad crossing alternates, no decision has yet been made as to which one of these alternates to use. An aerial photo print is included in the exhibits section of the statement which indicates the alignment of the selected alternate.

F. ALTERNATES TO AVOID PARK LAND

Several alternate alignments and proposals have been considered in determining the most appropriate location and design of this project. These alternates have been previously described and the probable beneficial and/or adverse effects of each of them has been discussed. Some of these previously described alternates would have avoided the necessity of taking the 10-foot strip of Pinewood Park. However, none of these were chosen and the reasons for choosing one of the alternates that will affect the park has been explained.

The chosen alternate, Four-Lane Alternate "B", will required 10 feet of new right-of-way plus a 25' -40' construction permit on the south side of the existing Montana 40. The possibility of taking the new right-of-way and the permit

on the north side of the existing highway, away from the park, was given a great deal of consideration and a study was made to determine if it would be feasible. Construction costs through the area would be essentially the same, and therefore, the main difference between shifting 10 feet north or south would be the cost of the right-of-way. If the shift were to be made for the park area, it would have to be carried on through town so that a jog would not be introduced into the alignment. Therefore, the study actually compared taking a 10-foot strip of right-of-way on the north or south side of Montana 40 between Stations 330± and 370±. The results of that study are as follows:

North Side - The following businesses would either be displaced or seriously damaged at an estimated cost of $308,240.

2 motels
1 garage
1 gun shop
1 Dairy King
3 service stations
1 grocery store - large
1 lumber company - large

South Side - The following businesses would either be displaced or seriously damaged at an estimated cost of $83,370.

1 small apartment
1 bar (parking only)
1 cafe (parking only)
2 service stations

Based on these results, it was decided that the extra 10 feet of right-of-way should be taken from the south side of the highway as it would be the most economical and would cause the least amount of disruption to the existing businesses.

Therefore, it has been determined by the State of Montana Department of Highways that there are no prudent and feasible alternatives to the taking of a portion of the Pinewood Park for highway purposes. The selected alternate was chosen on the basis of economy, service to the traveling public and community and least amount of environmental impact.

VIII. THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LOCAL SHORT-TERM USES OF MAN'S ENVIRONMENT AND THE MAINTENANCE AND ENHANCEMENT OF LONG-TERM PRODUCTIVITY

The construction phase of this project will probably extend through two construction seasons, although work may not be in progress all this time as most of the construction work will be shut down during the winter months. On a calendar day basis, it will probably take about one year. During the construction period, Columbia Falls and the surrounding area will undergo a short time of general disruption due to the construction process. There will be an increase in noise and air pollution, several homes and businesses will require moving, the construction limits will be cleared and detours will probably be necessary to route traffic around construction areas. However, upon completion of the project, the area will return to normal and adjust to the changes that have taken place. Therefore, the short-term uses will have little lasting effect on the environment.

In regard to the long-term productivity of the area, the small amount of adverse effects from the short-term use of the environment is certainly justified as this project will provide a fast, safe and efficient transportation facility for the traveling public that will benefit and serve the area. We do not foresee any major change in land use as a result of this project nor do we anticipate any significant adverse environmental effects.

IX. IRREVERSIBLE AND IRRETRIEVABLE COMMITMENTS OF RESOURCES

The construction of the project will result in the taking of additional land for right-of-way, although the amount taken will be small and will not be of sufficient quantity to be significant. A small strip of the Pinewood Park in Columbia Falls will be taken for right-of-way and this will result in a slight reduction of space for park use.

The gravel used in the roadway surfacing will be irretrievable, but here again the quantities will be insignificant.

There does not appear to be any major irreversible commitment of resources that would affect the beneficial uses of the environment in the area.

X. BENEFITS

This project will result in a fast, safe and efficient transportation facility that will benefit anyone traveling in the area. It will provide a much better highway for persons using this route to travel to and from Glacier National Park. Access to and through Columbia Falls will be improved and better parking facilities will be available. A new sidewalk and adequate lighting will be provided within the city limits, which will improve safety conditions for pedestrians. The project overall should improve the area both in regards to safety and aesthetics.

XI. MEASURES TAKEN TO MINIMIZE HARM TO SECTION 4(F) LANDS

Construction of the subject project will necessitate the taking of a 10-foot strip of right-of-way along the northern boundary of the park. Also involved will be a 25'-40' wide construction permit adjacent to the right-of-way take.

Through the park area, the new highway typical section will be 64' face-of-curb to face-of-curb. Within this 64' section will be 9' parking lanes on both sides of the roadway. Thus, this project will provide on-street parking along the park that has never been available before. From the face of the curb on back to the right-of-way line, an 8-foot wide sidewalk will be built. The edge of this sidewalk will be the actual new border of the park and will be a great improvement over the dirt path along the existing highway. This new sidewalk will improve pedestrian access to the park and provide a much more pleasing boundary between the park and the highway.

The part of the park that will be involved with the construction permit will be restored to such a condition that it will still be usable as part of the park. The slopes will be left as flat as possible, the topsoil will be replaced and grass will be reseeded.

As has been indicated previously, there is a possibility that the existing path from the north down to the pool may become impassable if the grades become too steep. More will be known about this situation as design progresses. However,

if the path does become too steep, a ramp or stairway will be built that will perpetuate this pedestrian traffic.

Some dust and noise will be unavoidable in the vicinity of the park during the construction period. However, the contractor will be required to exercise reasonable control over these conditions and cooperate with the local residents to maintain the most tolerable conditions.

Representatives of the Montana Department of Highways have met with Columbia Falls city officials and with the park director to discuss the proposed right-of-way taking and how it will affect the park. These people have indicated that the proposed taking will not damage the park or in any way lessen the number of people using the facility. Please refer to letter on page 60 of the exhibit section for this statement.

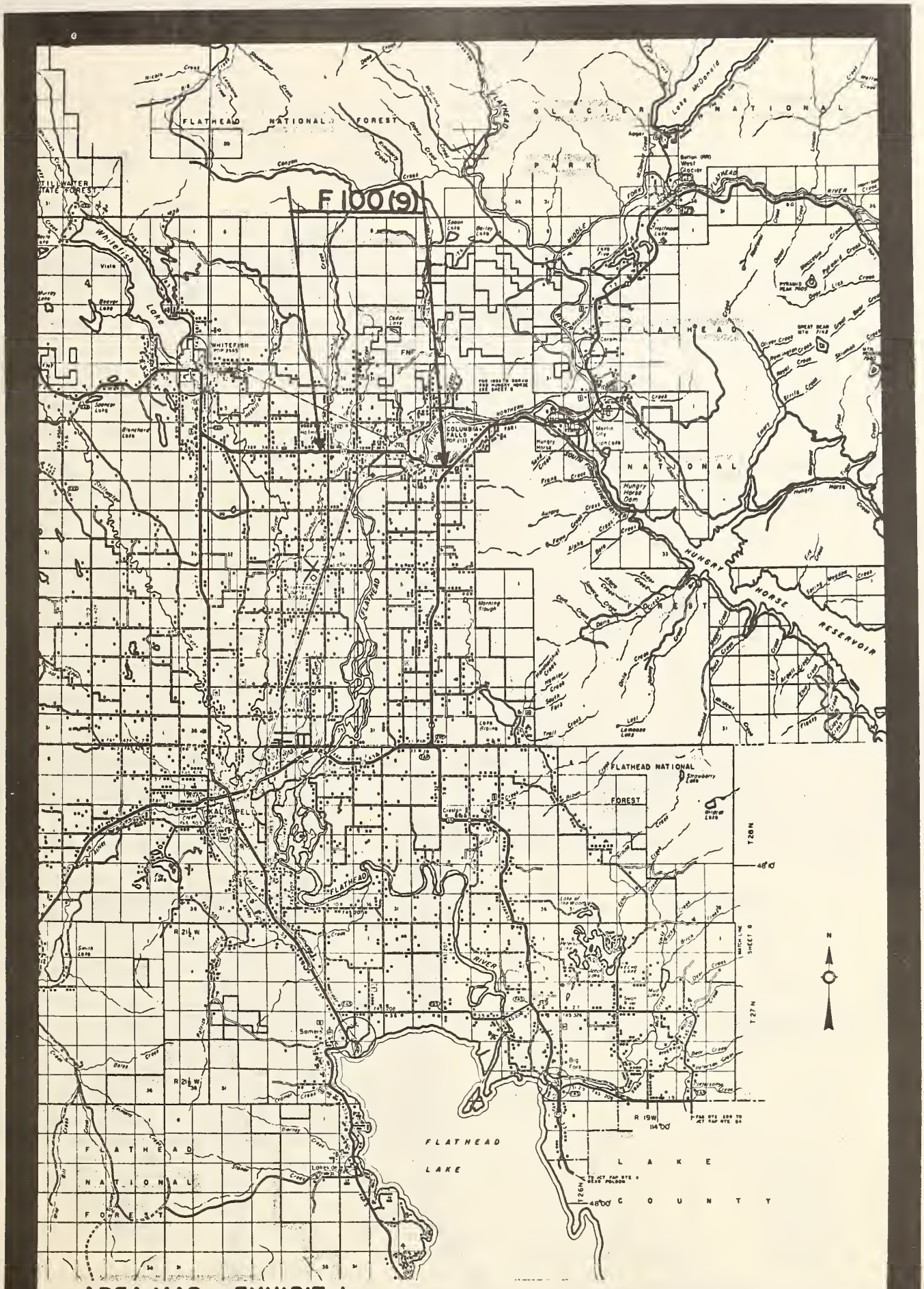
The park director was under the impression that the state might have to acquire the private property in lots 1 and 2 of block 68. If this were to happen, he and the city would like the Department of Highways to turn this property over to the city for an addition to the park. If the state did obtain this property, no doubt something could be worked out in which the property could be turned over to the city. However, at this time, it appears that only a 10-foot strip of this property will be taken and not the whole piece.

In lieu of this, the city feels that they will be satisfied if the state does some work in the park in exchange

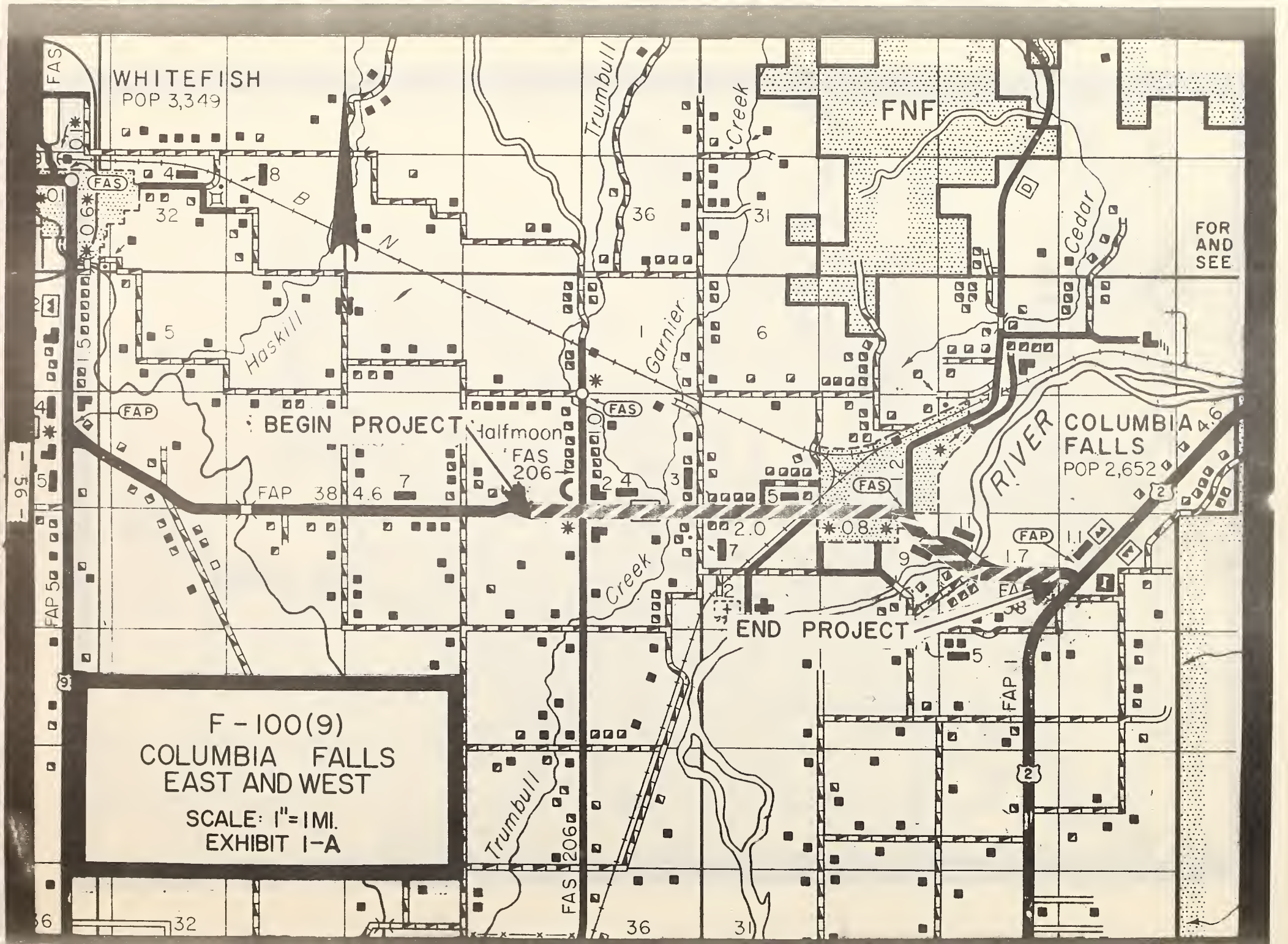
for the strip being taken for right-of-way. The city has indicated that they would like to have the parking lot or a basketball court paved. Details of this exchange will be worked out sometime in the future.

Included in the exhibit section of this statement are two letters from the City of Columbia Falls concerning the subject project. This first letter on page 61 indicates that the city would like to trade for the Thunderbird property if the state is required to purchase it. The Thunderbird property is the private property on lots 1 and 2 of block 68. The second letter on page 62 indicates that the city would be willing to exchange the necessary right-of-way for some paving in the park area.

XII. EXHIBITS



AREA MAP EXHIBIT 1


WHITEFISH
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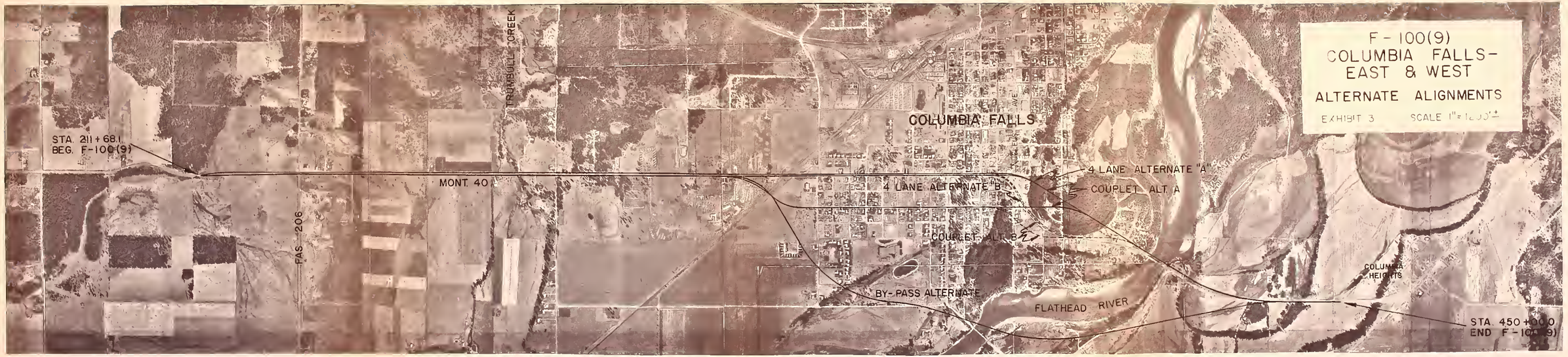
FNF
Trumbull
Creek
Cedar
FOR AND SEE
Haskill
Garnier
BEGIN PROJECT
Halfmoon
FAS 206
FAP 38
4.6
RIVER
COLUMBIA FALLS
POP 2,652
END PROJECT
FAP 5
FAP 1
FAS 206
F - 100(9)
COLUMBIA FALLS
EAST AND WEST
SCALE: 1" = 1 MI.
EXHIBIT 1-A

F-100(9)
COLUMBIA FALLS-
EAST & WEST

SELECTED ALTERNATE

EXHIBIT 2 SCALE 1" = 400' ±


340
350
360
370
380
390
400
410
420
430
440
COLUMBIA FALLS
FLATHEAD RIVER
N
STA 450+00.0
END F-100(9)
COLUMBIA HEIGHTS
F-100(9)
COLUMBIA FALLS-
EAST & WEST
SELECTED ALTERNATE
EXHIBIT 2 SCALE 1" = 400'


F-100(9)
COLUMBIA FALLS-
EAST & WEST
ALTERNATE ALIGNMENTS
EXHIBIT 3
SCALE 1"=1000'±
COLUMBIA FALLS
TRUMBULL CREEK
STA. 211+68.1
BEG. F-100(9)
MONT. 40
FAS-206
4 LANE ALTERNATE "A"
COUPLET ALT. A
4 LANE ALTERNATE "B"
COUPLET ALT. B
BY-PASS ALTERNATE
FLATHEAD RIVER
COLUMBIA HEIGHTS
STA. 450+00.0
END F-100(9)

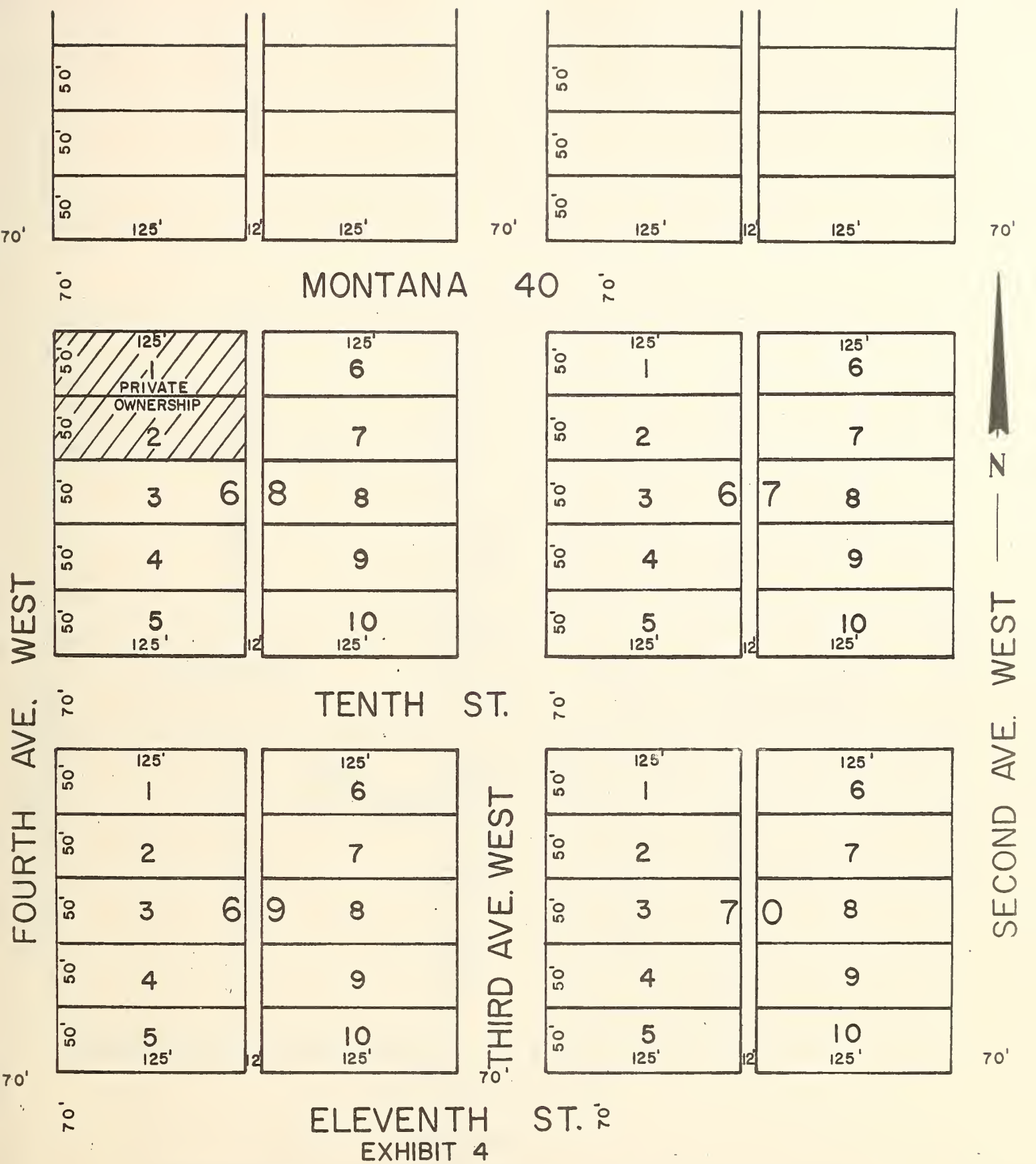


EXHIBIT 4

ORIGINAL PARK PURCHASED IN 1921—
ALL OF BLOCKS 67, 68, 69, 70 EXCEPT
FOR LOTS 1 and 2 OF BLOCK 68

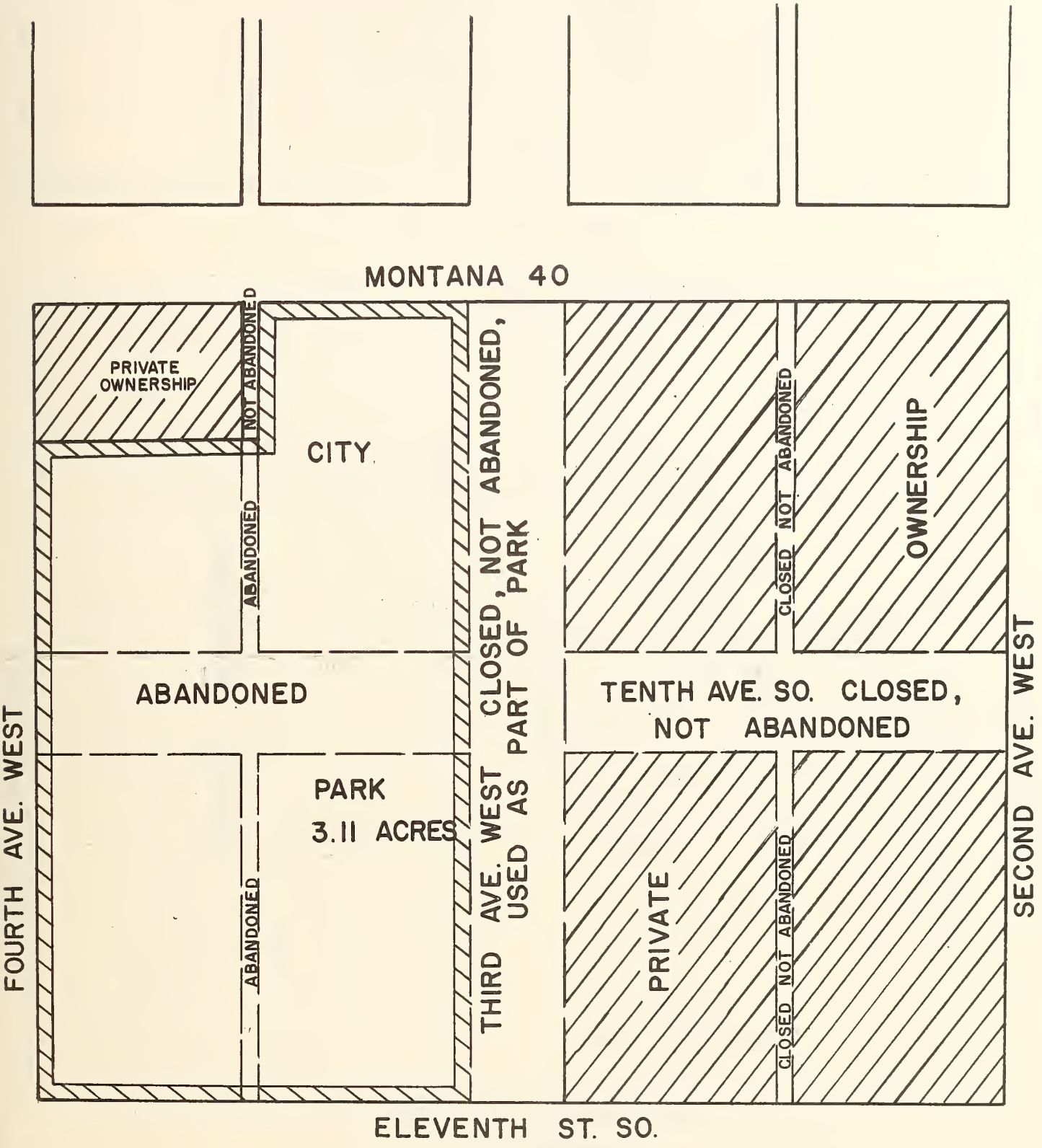


EXHIBIT 5

PRESENT PARK, ABANDONED STREETS, & PRIVATE LAND

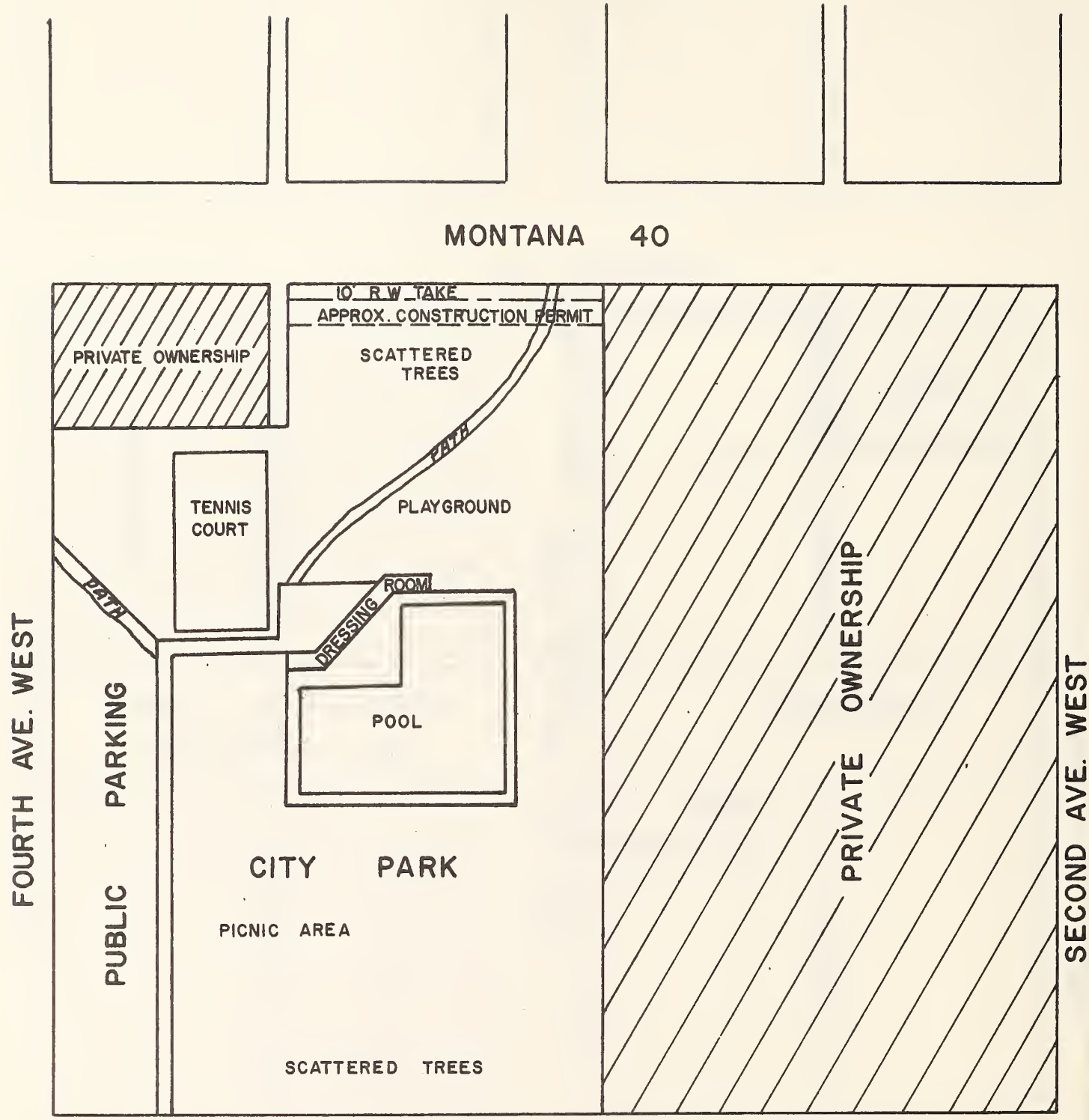


EXHIBIT 6

PRESENT PARK AND FACILITIES

CITY OF COLUMBIA FALLS
P. O. BOX 487
COLUMBIA FALLS, MONTANA 59912

May 16,1972

State Highway Department
James Keithly
Kalispell, Montana 59901

Dear Sir:

The Columbia Falls City Council feels the 10' permanent right of way plus 40' construction right of way on the north edge of Pinewood Park adjacent to Highway 40 will not be significant in the park operation at this time.

Sincerely yours,

Charleen Lyngstad

City Clerk

EXHIBIT 7

CITY OF COLUMBIA FALLS

P. O. BOX 487

COLUMBIA FALLS, MONTANA 59912

May 16, 1972

State Highway Department
James Keithly
Kalispell, Montana 59901

Dear Sir:

The Columbia Falls City Council asks that your department consider a trade of property in Pinewood Park if the State is required to purchase the Thunderbird property at the time of construction of Highway 40.

Sincerely yours,

Carlien Lyngstad

EXHIBIT 8

CITY OF COLUMBIA FALLS

P. O. BOX 467
COLUMBIA FALLS, MONTANA 59912

July 13,1972

Montana State Highway Commission
Right-of-Way Division,
Missoula, Montana 59801

Att: Vern E. Jones

Gentlemen:

The City of Columbia Falls will be willing to exchange right of way use for highway construction adjacent to Pinewood Park for labor and materials for blacktopping in the park area.

Sincerely yours,

Jane Ellison

Park Commissioner

by Lillian Speckels

City Clerk

EXHIBIT 9

S. H. Comm.—Form 4 A

INTER-DEPARTMENTAL MEMORANDUM

MONTANA STATE HIGHWAY COMMISSION

To SUPERVISOR - RIGHT OF WAY SECTION

Date July 14, 1972

From MANAGER - FIELD RIGHT OF WAY UNIT - MISSOULA

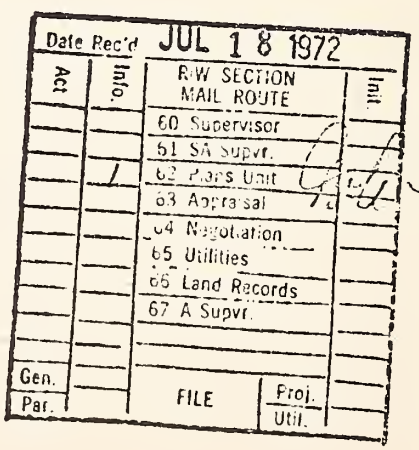
Subject: F 100 (9)
Columbia Falls-E&W

Ref: 62-MLN

In preparing the field study for the 4F statement for Pinewood park in Columbia Falls, you asked if there could be a different alternative acceptable to the city. The city has stated their first preference is if the Thunderbird Service Station is damaged out they would like the remainder. If the above doesn't happen they will exchange right of way for labor and materials for blacktopping in the park area.

JKT:VEJ:mw
Attachment:

EXHIBIT 10



Avoid Verbal Instructions

Photo No. 1 - Picture taken from northwest corner of park facing west toward private property.

Exhibit 11

Photo No. 2 - Picture taken from northwest corner of park facing east. The street in the picture is Montana 40 and adjacent to it on the downhill side is the land that will be involved with the right-of-way take and construction permit.

Exhibit 12

Photo No. 3 - Picture taken from Fourth Avenue West facing east toward the approximate center of the park. The dressing room and the swimming pool are in the center of the photo.

Exhibit 13

Photo No. 4 - Picture taken from southwest corner of park facing toward the northeast. Dressing rooms and swimming pool in left corner of picture.

Exhibit 14

Photo No. 5 - Picture taken from southeast corner of park facing northwest. Dressing rooms and swimming pool in center of picture.

Exhibit 15

Photo No. 6 - Picture taken from northwest corner of park facing north toward Montana 40. This shows some of the land that will be needed for the right-of-way take and construction permit. House shown in picture is actually on north side of Montana 40.

Exhibit 16

Photo No. 7 - This picture was taken from inside the park on the south side of Montana 40 facing north. It shows a portion of Third Avenue West that is presently closed and used as part of the park. It also shows some of the land that will be involved in the right-of-way take and construction permit.

Exhibit 17

Photo No. 8 - Picture taken from northeast corner of park facing southwest. Dressing rooms and swimming pool in upper right hand corner.

Exhibit 18

Photo No. 9 - This picture was taken from the northern edge of the private property in the northwest corner of the park facing south. It shows the approximate boundaries of the private property with the dressing rooms and playground in the background.

Exhibit 19

Photo No. 10 - Picture taken from northern edge of park facing southwest and showing the playground. Right center of picture shows the private property.

Exhibit 20

Photo No. 11 - Picture of playground taken from northern edge of park facing south. Shows part of private property in right center of picture.

Exhibit 21

Photo No. 12 - Picture of playground taken from northern edge of park facing south.

Exhibit 22


THE GREAT SEAL OF THE STATE OF MONTANA
ORO -Y- PLATA